

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Book by Cuban 5 is powerful indictment of capitalist 'justice'
— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 80/NO. 19 MAY 16, 2016

Wis. May Day action protests law targeting immigrants

BY ILONA GERSH

MILWAUKEE — A spirited march and rally of more than 1,000 people here May 1, International Workers Day, demonstrated the self-confidence of immigrant workers and youth who are leading a fight against anti-immigrant legislation in the state. Many carried handmade signs and banners in English and Spanish, saying “Keep families together!” “We are all Wisconsin!” “Enough of the migra [immigration cops]!” “Rights for immigrants, NOW!”

Buses came from Racine, Madison, and Green Bay. Voces de la Frontera (Voices from the Border), which organized the protest, held a neighborhood block party before the march with informational tables, music, food, and poster-making.

There were small contingents of home care and nursing home workers from the Service Employees International Union. **Continued on page 5**

Strikers reject Verizon offer, receive solidarity

‘We’ll stay out one day longer, one day stronger!’



Unionists on strike against Verizon rally in Jersey City, New Jersey, April 29, rejecting telecommunications giant’s “last, best, final” concession-filled offer made the previous day.

BY CANDACE WAGNER

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The East Coast strike of 39,000 unionists against telecommunications giant Verizon, the largest strike in the U.S.

since the last Verizon walkout five years ago, is making an impact across the country.

Hundreds of members of the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers rallied here April 29 to tell Verizon they weren’t accepting the “last, best and final” offer the **Continued on page 4**

Workers need international solidarity, not ‘Americanism’

The following statement was released May 3 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump says he’s going to “make America great again.” Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton

Socialist Workers Party campaign statement

says America is already great.

Both want workers to think of ourselves as “Americans,” and to view working people across the globe as our enemies. We need to recognize ourselves as part of a worldwide working class with common interests and a common enemy: capitalism.

Clinton is for using U.S. military might to defend American interests and argues for more “robust” intervention than President Barack Obama. Trump claims to be the “peace” candidate who will put America First by building up a strong military and let **Continued on page 9**

Socialist Workers Party joins fights, gets on Colorado ballot



Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart, right, and Joel Britton talk with packinghouse worker outside Cargill plant in Fort Morgan, Colorado, April 29.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart and supporters filed papers in Denver April 29, putting him and presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy on the Colorado ballot. Then they drove to Fort Morgan in a snowstorm to talk to workers at shift change at the big Cargill Meat Solutions plant there.

Seeing a sign inviting them to “Meet Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president,” many workers driving out of the plant pulled over to talk to him and take campaign biographies. Thirty-four bought cop-

ies of the *Militant*. The *Fort Morgan Times* ran a front-page photo story on the plant-gate campaigning May 3.

The Colorado campaigners stopped to warm up at a cafe frequented by Somali workers, some of whom were fired by Cargill Dec. 23 after they walked off the job when the company began refusing them prayer breaks. “I was fired a week before the others,” Abdi Ali told Hart. “I asked for a break to pray and my supervisor said no. I went anyway and was fired.” Ali said he is getting unemployment compensation, but Cargill is appealing. **Continued on page 3**

Trump, Clinton debate best foreign policy to advance US imperialism

BY SETH GALINSKY

As Hillary Clinton heads toward clinching the Democratic Party nomination and Donald Trump the Republican nod, there has been increased discussion of their foreign policies. Both defend U.S. imperialist interests

around the globe, and the use of military might to enforce those interests. But *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd gets at some of their differences in an April 30 column, where she wrote, “It’s Hillary the Hawk against Donald the Quasi-Dove.”

Along similar lines the April 24 *Times* magazine featured the article “How Hillary Clinton Became a Hawk” by Mark Landler, the paper’s White House correspondent. He writes approvingly that Clinton believes “that the calculated use of **Continued on page 8**

Deaths mount in Syria as US, Russian gov’ts continue talks

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Syria’s dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad, reinforced by Russian airstrikes and Iranian-backed forces, has escalated attacks in parts of the northern city of Aleppo controlled by anti-government groups. As civilian casualties mount, the two-month partial cease-fire cobbled together by Washington and Moscow has virtually collapsed.

The Russian and U.S. governments, through rounds of talks in Geneva, **Continued on page 9**

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Toronto Teamsters strike produce company for wages

Calif. cop to stand trial for killing Andrew Thomas

BY ERIC SIMPSON

OROVILLE, Calif. — Former Paradise cop Patrick Feaster must stand trial for involuntary manslaughter in the death of Andrew Thomas, Judge James Reilley of the Butte County court ruled April 22. Feaster has pleaded not guilty. He was fired in February.

Feaster shot Thomas, 26, as he attempted to climb out of his car, which crashed while Feaster pursued him in a patrol car Nov. 26. Passenger Darien Ehorn, 23, was thrown from the car and died at the scene.

The opening frame of the cop car’s dashcam video was projected on the courtroom wall. The video, which has been widely seen on the Internet, shows Feaster approaching the overturned vehicle with his gun drawn and shooting Thomas through the neck. Feaster then searches for his spent shell casing.

The courtroom was filled with spectators. Thomas’ parents, grandmother, two of his sisters and an uncle were there, along with family friends and opponents of police brutality who had pressed for Feaster to be fired and charged.

“It’s public reaction that caused [District Attorney Michael] Ramsey to fight even this hard, which is not enough,” Melissa Burnside, 28, who had been part of the protests, told the *Militant*. “If the cops have gone rogue, who do you turn to? The outcry came after the district attorney wasn’t on our side.”

During the hearing, defense attorney Paul Goyette said he intends to file a motion to dismiss a “gun enhancement” to the involuntary manslaughter charge because Feaster’s police duties required

him to carry the weapon. The judge will hear arguments on this May 11.

Family members gathered outside the courthouse called on supporters to “come out and make awareness that police brutality is not OK.”

Since his death “I feel like I’ve been punched in the stomach,” Fran Tzugaris, 78, Thomas’ grandmother, told the *Militant*. In a memorial fund appeal posted on the Internet to help with funeral expenses, Thomas’ sister Cassandra Roller wrote, “I pray that justice is served not only for my brother but for there to be a change and end to police brutality, an international problem that affects us all as human beings.”

U.S.-Philippine exercises heighten tensions with Beijing

BY EMMA JOHNSON

U.S. warplanes operating out of Clark Air Base in the Philippines flew close by the Scarborough Shoal three times in late April, provoking protests from the Chinese government. Both Beijing and Manila claim the grouping of reefs and rocks, which is located off the Philippine coast. Washington has just begun permanently stationing warplanes in the Philippines under a recent agreement with the government in Manila.

These are among the latest developments as Washington and Beijing jockey for control of the South China Sea, one of the busiest commercial waterways.

Domination of the Pacific was one of the most cherished conquests of U.S. imperialism coming out of its bloody victory in World War II. Today this is



Relatives, friends and supporters of Andrew Thomas outside Butte County, California, courthouse April 22. Protests led to charges and firing of cop Patrick Feaster, who killed Thomas.

challenged by the growing economic and military role of Beijing.

Other governments in the region contest the Chinese government’s claim to the vast majority of the sea and its islands. Washington is using these rivalries to expand its military ties, from the Philippines to India.

Under the new agreement, Washington can build and operate facilities at five Philippine military bases for at least 10 years, including on the western island of Palawan, which has 270 miles of coastline along the South China Sea. In the early 1990s, sustained protests by working people forced the Pentagon to close its large bases in the Philippines. But for more than a decade the Philippine government has gradually allowed an expanded U.S. military presence.

The two militaries have begun joint patrols of the seas, said Defense Secretary Ashton Carter April 14 in Manila, on a visit that coincided with a 10-day U.S.-Philippine military drill.

Carter also visited the USS John Stennis, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, as it cruised through the South China Sea. “We have been here for decade upon decade,” he said. “What’s new is the context and tension that exists,” he said, blaming Beijing.

Over the recent period the Chinese government has carried out major dredg-

ing in the sea, turning reefs and islets into islands, and built runways that can host the biggest Chinese aircraft, radar installations and ports. The U.S. Navy has conducted “freedom of navigation” military patrols close to Beijing’s newly built islands, leading to protests by Chinese officials.

“China was the first country to discover, name, develop and manage the South China Sea islands,” Foreign Minister Wang Yi told a news conference in March. “History will prove who is a mere guest and who is a real host.”

Beijing seized control of the Scarborough Shoal four years ago after a military standoff with the Philippine coast guard. The Philippine government complained to a U.N.-organized arbitration court, accusing Beijing of violating international law and of interfering with Filipino fishermen in the area. A ruling is expected in the coming months.

Before visiting the Philippines, Carter met with Indian officials for talks about increased military cooperation between Washington and New Delhi, whose rulers are also in growing competition with Beijing. The measures agreed to were limited to logistics, sharing information and opening up each other’s military bases for refueling and restocking, which the *New York Times* described as “largely symbolic.”

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THE MILITANT

Solidarity with striking Verizon workers!

Verizon, the telecommunications giant, wants to contract out more work, raise health costs, and assign workers to be out of town for extended periods. The ‘Militant’ campaigns for the broadest solidarity possible in a fight that’s in the interests of all workers!

CWA District 2-13
Strikers and supporters picket outside Verizon store in Philadelphia April 22.

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SWP brings internationalism to Indiana plant closure protest

BY LAURA ANDERSON

INDIANAPOLIS — Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois, and supporters brought an internationalist working-class perspective to an April 29 rally of hundreds here protesting air conditioner manufacturer Carrier’s decision to move its plant to Mexico, making 1,400 workers jobless. The rally was sponsored by the United Steelworkers union.

The theme of the rally, including speeches by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders was “Make it in America.” Sanders’ platform features a section on “Keeping jobs in the U.S.”

Republican candidate Donald Trump has pledged to impose a 35 percent tariff on Carrier’s Mexican-made products. “They’re going to call me and say, ‘Mr. President, Carrier has decided to stay in Indiana,’” Trump told a crowd in Indianapolis April 27.

Fein’s position contrasts sharply with the capitalist politicians and union officials. “The Socialist Workers Party is in solidarity with the Carrier workers, but the nationalist, patriotic slogans raised by the speakers here today are not the answer,” Fein told Helen Williams and Antoinette Jones, United Auto Workers members who work on the General Motors assembly line in Kokomo. “Divide and rule is the bosses trick to weaken the unions. We need international working-class solidarity. All workers need jobs.”

“I agree with the international view,” Williams responded, and decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

“I am for bringing jobs back to Amer-

ica,” Brandon Terrill, a UAW member who works at the GM truck assembly plant in Fort Wayne, told Fein.

“There is an economic crisis wracking the capitalist world,” Fein said. “Unemployment is a world problem, and all workers need jobs. We are part of an international working class.

“My party proposes the labor movement fight for a government-funded mass public works program putting millions to work at union scale building things workers need — housing, hospitals, infrastructure. That, along with organizing solidarity with workers worldwide as they fight for electrification, education, jobs and dignity, would unite the working class — not divide it like the ‘Save American jobs’ slogan does.”

“I wish you good luck on your campaign,” Terrill told Fein. He signed up for a subscription to the *Militant*.

“I think everyone in the world deserves the right to take care of their families,” warehouse worker Brian Hixon told Fein. “Most of my co-workers are from Myanmar. We’re all in the same Teamsters union.”

“I agree with what you say about the Democrats and Republicans being capitalist parties,” he said, “but I want my vote to count. I’m voting for Bernie because he has a chance to win.”

“The point isn’t to win an election, but to build a revolutionary workers movement to take power from the capitalist class,” Fein replied.

SWP candidate meets fighters at May Day march



Militant/Laura Anderson

MILWAUKEE — A Socialist Workers Party contingent including vice-presidential candidate Osborne Hart, right, joined more than 1,000 people here May 1 in the May Day March for Immigrant and Worker Rights. (See article on front page.)

“Demonstrations like today’s help break down divisions among workers that only help the bosses,” Hart told Tomás Medina, a flooring installer who helped bring a busload of workers and young people from Green Bay. “We need to organize everyone, regardless of where they were born.”

Medina agreed, telling Hart that previous mobilizations had pushed back one proposed anti-immigrant, anti-worker law.

Campaigning with Hart, communists sold 10 *Militant* subscriptions and seven books as they engaged in discussion and debate with marchers.

“I never thought I would see these kind of books in this country!” said Nieves Cordova, above left, a Mexican-born student at Lakeland College in Green Bay, upon seeing the Socialist Workers Party table.

Cordova said that after she gave a talk in her class about socialism, some students asked her, “Where are you from, Cuba?”

She bought three books, got a subscription and took stacks of campaign leaflets in English and Spanish.

— ILONA GERSH AND BETSY FARLEY

Socialist Workers Party joins fights, gets on ballot

Continued from front page

ing payments to some workers.

“If Cargill gets away with this here, it has an effect beyond Colorado,” Hart said. “Other bosses are watching what is happening here. Working people need to stand with you and fight this.”

Hart traveled to Milwaukee to join the May Day rally there, while Kennedy marched with hundreds of thousands of workers at the rally in Havana.

SWP campaigners are introducing many workers to the party’s revolutionary program through efforts to put the party’s candidates on the ballot in Tennessee and New Jersey as well.

“I am so excited reading these articles in the *Militant*,” Carolyn Kelley, a retired social worker, told SWP member Rachele Fruit on the phone April 29. Fruit and others met Kelley going door to door in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Fruit invited Kelley and her husband, a union electrician, to attend the Socialist Workers Party conference in Oberlin, Ohio, June 16-18. “Now I have someone to vote for, and we wish we could attend the conference in Ohio,” she said. The Kelleys agreed to be electors to help put the SWP on the ballot.

In four days the Socialist Workers Party team went to workers’ districts in Chattanooga, Smyrna, Murfreesboro and Cleveland, Tennessee. They met six potential electors and sold six *Militant* subscriptions and four books.

At a Verizon strike rally in Jersey City April 29, 17 workers signed petitions to put the SWP on the ballot in New Jersey, one bought a subscription to the *Militant* and seven got single copies. The Socialist Workers Party has been building support for the strike and discussing the important stakes involved for working

people everywhere campaigners go.

Syrian-born mechanic Nart Zakaria liked the SWP’s call for Washington to get out of the Mideast. He subscribed to the *Militant* after talking to socialists at his door in Haskell, New Jersey, April 30. Washington, Moscow and Tehran “just want to divide up the pie so each can dominate Syria and Iraq,” he said.

When a neighbor told the campaigners about a nearby Verizon picket line, they stopped by to show their support.

Integrating the New Jersey ballot drive into such activities, SWP teams have collected more than 1,000 signatures, while winning many new readers of the party’s paper and books. The ballot drive will wrap up May 8.

“I came across an old issue of the *Militant* in the prison dayroom here and found it quite informative,” a worker incarcerated in Illinois since 1967 wrote. “I wish to inquire whether you share your ’zine with those of us confined to these gulags.” He received a reduced-rate subscription covered by the Militant Prisoners’ Fund. This spring 14 workers behind bars have subscribed.

Keep up progress on Militant fund

At the end of the fourth week of the six-week effort the Socialist Workers Party is leading to win 1,550 readers and \$110,000 in contributions to the party press, 1,009 subscriptions and \$48,550 have come in. We want to continue picking up the pace of contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund, which is behind schedule. Nearly \$20,000 arrived last week. Supporters in France pledged \$450 and have already collected \$390.

Contact a Socialist Workers Party branch near you (see list on page 8) to join in party-building activity at labor

and social struggles, campaigning door to door in large cities and small towns and increasing the readership and support for the party’s press.

Spring subscription drive			
April 2 - May 17 (week 4)			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Lincoln*	17	16	94%
Oakland	110	80	73%
Miami	50	34	68%
New York	220	148	67%
Chicago	125	84	67%
Philadelphia	90	59	66%
Washington	115	70	61%
Twin Cities	80	47	59%
Seattle	100	56	56%
Atlanta	100	55	55%
Los Angeles	200	101	51%
Total U.S.	1207	750	62%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Manchester	60	48	80%
London	75	57	76%
Total U.K.	135	105	78%
CANADA			
Calgary	45	32	71%
Montreal	55	35	64%
Total Canada	100	67	67%
AUSTRALIA	60	40	67%
NEW ZEALAND	50	33	66%
PRISONERS	15	14	93%
Total	1567	1009	65%
Should be	1550	1033	67%
*Raised goal			

Militant Fighting Fund			
April 2- May 17 (week 4)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Oakland	\$14,500	\$8,936	62%
Miami	\$3,000	\$1,390	46%
Lincoln*	\$240	\$111	46%
Chicago	\$11,500	\$5,192	45%
New York	\$21,000	\$8,635	41%
Seattle	\$7,500	\$3,065	41%
Atlanta	\$10,000	\$4,085	41%
Washington	\$7,700	\$3,084	40%
Los Angeles	\$8,600	\$2,995	35%
Philadelphia	\$3,200	\$930	29%
Twin Cities	\$3,500	\$770	22%
U.S. Total	\$90,740	\$39,193	43%
CANADA			
Montreal	\$4,000	\$3,200	80%
Calgary	\$3,200	\$1,877	59%
Canada Total	\$7,200	\$5,077	71%
NEW ZEALAND			
	\$4,000	\$1,501	38%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$2,000	\$1,040	52%
Manchester	\$700	\$329	47%
U.K. Total	\$2,700	\$1,369	51%
AUSTRALIA	\$1,100	\$1,020	93%
FRANCE			
	\$450	\$390	87%
Total	\$106,190	\$48,550	44%
Should be	\$110,000	\$73,333	67%
*Raised goal			

Framed-up Quebec rail workers gain union support

BY MITCHEL ROSENBERG
AND JOHN STEELE

The fight against the frame-up of rail workers Tom Harding and Richard Labrie in Quebec is gaining support. Messages of solidarity have recently been sent by Steelworkers locals in the Philadelphia area and Lincoln, Nebraska.

Harding, a locomotive engineer, and Labrie, a train controller, are members of United Steelworkers Local 1976. They, along with former Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway official Jean Demaitre, are charged by the Quebec Crown Prosecutor with criminal negligence causing death for the July 6, 2013, derailment and explosion of an oil train in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. If convicted they could face life in prison.

The train was operated by a one-person crew — Harding — under special dispensation provided by the Canadian government for the rail bosses.

The night of the explosion, Harding parked the train after his 12-hour shift, activated the locomotive air brakes, set hand brakes on seven tanker cars, and left to get some sleep. A fire broke out that night on the engine. Volunteer firefighters turned off the engine when they put it out. The company sent out a track manager, who was not knowledgeable about locomotives and didn't start another engine. This caused the air brakes to bleed out and the train rolled down into Lac-Mégantic, crashed and exploded, killing 47 people.

"The Executive Board and Membership of USW Local 10-234, Oil Refinery Workers in Trainer, Pennsylvania, would like to extend our support and Solidarity in your battle against Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway," said local president Jonas Dauber in a letter sent to Steelworkers Local 1976 in Montreal April 11, along with a \$500 contribution to the defense effort. "Too many times do our brothers and sisters in the workplace have blame placed on them by Companies that cut spending, decrease manpower and increase workload. Those decisions have a great impact on the safety of workers, the community and the environment."

USW Local 10-1, which organizes workers at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery, also contributed \$500 to fight the frame-up. "It was the right thing to do," Matt Tankelewicz, a crude distillation unit operator there, told the *Militant*. "These two guys are being scapegoated for a systemic problem."

From Lincoln, Nebraska, United Steelworkers Local 286 President Hugh Bowen wrote, "All union members, workers, and supporters of democratic rights in the U.S., Canada and beyond have a stake in the fight to defeat the efforts of the Canadian government and railroad employers to frame Harding and Labrie." That local sent \$100 toward the defense efforts.

Harding's attorney, Thomas Walsh, spoke about the case to students at the University of Quebec in Montreal April 7, along with Fritz Edler, a retired Amtrak engineer from Washington, D.C. who is active in Railroad

Workers United. "For the MMA, the accent was on profit, the bottom line," Walsh said. "They ran their trains with one-person crews, a badly wired backup safety system and instructions not to use the automatic braking system which could have prevented the disaster."

Walsh also attended the convention of Railroad Workers United, a U.S.-based inter-union group of rail activists, held in Chicago March 31-April 1.

"Now is a critical time to draw together support from union members and supporters of democratic rights," said Walsh in an address to the morning session on the second day of the gathering.

Solidarity messages for the Tom Harding and Richard Labrie defense should be sent to their union, USW 1976 / Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC H1V 2L1. Email: info@1976usw.ca.

Copies should be sent to: Thomas Walsh, 165 Rue Wellington N. Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9. Email: thomaspwalsh@hotmail.com.

Contributions can be sent in Canada to Syndicat des Métallos, 565, boulevard Crémazie Est, bureau 5100, Montreal, QC H2M 2V8. In the U.S. send checks to Tom Harding Defense Fund, First Niagara Bank, 25 McClellan Drive, Nassau, NY 12123.

Joe Swanson in Lincoln, Nebraska, contributed to this article.

UK candidates debate gov't anti-Muslim law



Militant/Ögmundur Jónsson

LONDON — Jonathan Silberman, the Communist League candidate for mayor and assembly here, speaks at a debate organized by Muslim Engagement and Development in Stamford Hill April 28.

Suyfan Ismail from MEND, next to Silberman, asked for the assembly candidates' views on the Prevent program. This government scheme encourages individuals, and requires workers in schools and the health service, to report others they suspect of "extremist" views. The nearby Waltham Forest Council of Mosques boycotts Prevent as an anti-Muslim witch hunt.

The Green Party's Samir Jeraj, third from right, said the Prevent program should be reviewed. Tim Allen of the Respect Party, second from right, called for it to be scrapped, while backing the cops shooting to kill as part of the government's "counterterrorist" strategy. At right is Liberal Democrat Terry Stacy.

"Prevent targets Muslims and is aimed at turning working people into snitches, getting us to spy on one another. The Communist League opposes all government attacks on working people's rights in the name of counterterrorism," Silberman said. "The fight against attacks on Muslims should go hand in hand with the fight against Jew-hatred," he added, referring to the recent suspension of prominent Labour Party officials for anti-Semitism.

— PAUL DAVIES

Strikers reject Verizon offer, receive solidarity

Continued from front page

company had presented the previous day.

Verizon workers from Massachusetts to Virginia went on strike April 13 after 10 months of fruitless contract negotiations. Their previous contract expired Aug. 1.

The company cut off health care benefits for strikers and their families May 1.

Verizon, which made an operating profit of \$30 billion last year, over-nighted a letter from Executive Vice President Marc Reed outlining the company's offer to every striking employee.

"To Mr. Reed — it's just your final best offer if we take it, and we won't take it!" IBEW Local 827 President Robert Speer told the rally, which erupted in cheering and chants of "One day longer, one day stronger." Members of the painters union and the Amalgamated Transit Union were there to show their support.

Verizon's latest offer upped the wage increase from 6.5 to 7.5 percent over three years. Reed's letter claimed the raise "will be greater than the average increase in healthcare expense over the life of the contract," which most strikers dispute. The company also pledged that if the unions sign the agreement by May 20, demands for changes in involuntary temporary work assignments to another state and modifications in Sunday premium pay would be dropped.

"There was no movement on the closing of call centers" in the offer, an April 28 CWA District 1 bargain-

ing report commented. "They gave us an insulting proposal on contracting out plant work that does not return any contracted work to the bargaining unit, but might possibly slow down further contracting out in the future." Verizon proposes reducing disability benefits as well.

Support for strike

At the rally Tom Sterlacci, who pickets a Verizon work center in Se-caucus described the support the strikers receive. "All day people roll down the window and say, 'We're with you.' They bring water and coffee. There's been UPS drivers, a couple of Walmart workers and county garbage collectors."

Dawn Sickles and Liz Null had been on the picket line in Manhattan since 7 a.m. when this reporter dropped by in the afternoon May 2. "Usually we start the morning at a hotel that is housing scabs. We've gotten the support of the hotel workers union, so many hotels have asked them to leave," Sickles said.

Many strikers say public support for them is strong because of the economic difficulties faced by most workers. "People are upset," Sickles said. "They're aware of the disparities. They have kids at home in their 30s, living in the basement."

A central issue in the strike is the company's demand to cap pensions after 30 years of service and revise the calculations used to set lump sum retirement payments, Null said. The company's offer includes incentives for voluntary early retirement.

"We recognize why they are downsizing with the change in technology," Null said. "But they are so mean-spirited. They track workers with a GPS. If you come in a minute late they make you stand against the wall like you're in elementary school."

'Bosses try to make unions look bad'

"What's happening to us has been happening to a lot of workers," Rudy Destin told the *Militant* at a Brooklyn picket line May 2. "Motown was called that because it was Motor City, the heart of blue collar work. Now Michigan has become a 'right-to-work' state and they want to do the same in New York. The bosses are trying to make the union into something bad — like a drug cartel." Workers driving past honked in solidarity as pickets chanted, "Every job a union job!" and "New York is a union town!"

Verizon considers Washington, Maryland and Delaware one service region, technician Lapreia Terry said at a May 2 picket line at a wireless store in Washington, D.C. Previously, when workers accepted two-week assignments away from their workstation, Verizon footed the bill for lodging. "Now they want us to go for 60 days at a time and pay our own lodging," she said.

A National Day of Action May 5 will include strike rallies and will expand picketing at Verizon Wireless stores across the country with the help of CWA districts and other unions.

Glova Scott in Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

MAGGIE TROWE, EDITOR

Help the *Militant* cover labor struggles around the world!

This column gives a voice to those engaged in battle and building solidarity today — including striking Verizon workers, Steelworkers opposing concessions, construction workers demanding safe conditions and workers fighting for \$15 and a union. I invite those involved in workers' battles to contact me at 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018; or (212) 244-4899; or themilitant@mac.com. We'll work together to ensure your story is told.

— Maggie Trowe

Toronto Teamsters strike produce company for wages

TORONTO — Twelve members of Teamsters Local 419 set up pickets at the Ontario Food Terminal here at 1 a.m. April 21, slowing down trucks trying to get into the terminal for delivery and pick up. The unionists unload trucks for Fresh Taste Produce, one of the many companies operating inside the terminal. In their fight for a first contract the central issue is wages. While the cost of rent, food and fuel have gone up, they have not had a pay raise in 14 years, strikers told the *Militant*. Wages range from \$14 to \$17 per hour (US\$11-\$13.50).

"The industry standard we're trying to get is about \$20 per hour [US\$16]," Local 419 representative Ken Dean told the *Militant* April 24 in a phone interview.

"One guy has worked here for 18 years and is earning \$14.50," striker Lobsang Tenzin told the *Militant*. "We're just fighting to be treated like other people here." Most of the strikers are Tibetans from India and Nepal. There are over 4,000 Tibetans living in Toronto, many in Parkdale, a workers district not far from the terminal.

"Most of the Tibetans are very newly immigrated to Canada," Karma Tsetan, a worker at another company in the terminal, told CBC News. "So for them to get a job right away with no Canadian experience is really, really hard." Many end up working at the terminal.

The Ontario Food Terminal is the largest wholesale fresh fruit and produce terminal in Canada. Over 5,000 businesses buy their produce here, including two of the major supermarket chains.

Strikers said they are getting support from other terminal workers as well as many truckers and others driving in and out. Trucks waiting to get into the market were backed up for blocks.

Local 419 announced May 3 the Fresh Taste workers had ratified their first collective agreement, ending the strike.

— Susan Berman



Militant/Susan Berman

Fresh Taste Produce workers, members of Teamsters Local 419, picket Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto April 21, slowing truck traffic, during strike for higher wages and first contract.

May Day action protests law targeting immigrants

Continued from front page

tional Union and the United Food and Commercial Workers calling for a \$15 minimum wage and union rights.

"I came here to support the fight of immigrants. We all need to stick together," home care worker Maggie Ressler, who was carrying an SEIU Fight for \$15 banner, told the *Militant*. "A lot of immigrant workers get paid \$7.25 an hour doing work that we get paid more for."

The May Day action stands on the shoulders of a Feb. 18 "Day Without Latinos," when some 20,000 people, many waving American and Mexican flags, protested in Madison against two anti-immigrant and anti-worker bills in the Wisconsin state legislature. In an echo of the May 1, 2006, protests that shut down factories and businesses across the United States to protest anti-immigrant bills before the U.S. Congress, workers at factories, warehouses, stores and dairy farms across Wisconsin skipped work that day.

The February strike and protests helped block passage of Assembly Bill 450, which would have withheld funding from so-called sanctuary cities and banned any local legislation that blocked government employees from "cooperating with a federal immigration officer" or that prevented cops from questioning anyone they stop about their immigration status.

Law denies ID to immigrant workers

But Gov. Scott Walker signed Senate Bill 533 April 25. That law blocks county officials from issuing photo identification to anyone who can't prove they are legal residents. This makes it harder for a wide range of working people to get needed ID. Villages and cities would still be allowed to issue IDs but the card would have to say, "Not authorized for voting purposes."

"I'm against SB 533 because people need state identification to do practically anything, including immigrants, former prisoners, homeless people

and others," Jordan Greene, a student at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, said at the May 1 protest.

Another side of the Milwaukee march was support for two executive orders by President Barack Obama that temporarily halt the deportations of some immigrant children without papers who have grown up in the United States and the undocumented parents of children who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Federal courts have blocked the "deferred action" orders and the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review the case.

Deferred action, "would help 5 million people, not specifically all the community," Huelmely Jesus told Wisconsin Public Radio. "But at least it would benefit the children and some families."

"The Latino community is present and we're not going anywhere," Kenia Coronado, a youth organizer with Voces de la Frontera, told the *Militant*. "We're a strong labor force in this community."

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The Worldwide Economic Crisis and the 2016 Elections — Why a Struggle for Workers Power Is Necessary. Speaker: Betsey Stone, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 13, 7:30 p.m. 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

UNITED KINGDOM

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The Fight Against Jew-Hatred; the Stakes for the Working Class. Sat., May 14, 6:30 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, 26-28 Hilton House, Hilton Street. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 17, 1991

COTTAGEVILLE, West Virginia — Chanting "Liberate Ravenswood," and "Union, union," 5,000 members and supporters of United Steelworkers of America Local 5668 rallied here April 28, four miles from Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation (RAC). The 1,700 Steelworkers at RAC have been locked out for six months.

Groups of union hospital workers, postal workers, garment workers, rail workers, and Steelworkers from many locals and several states were visible in the crowd. Arriving cars and buses were greeted by Local 5668 members with buttons commemorating "The Battle of Fort RAC." This refers to the barbed wire fences, video cameras, armed security guards, and federal marshals brought to Ravenswood by the company and the courts.



May 16, 1966

HAYNEVILLE, Ala. — Nearly 900 members of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (known as the Black Panther party) attended a mass meeting here on May 3 to nominate a full slate of candidates for county offices. The spirit of the meeting was reflected in the comment of one Lowndes woman: "We're making history today."

Holding such a meeting is one of the ways a new party can win a place on the ballot in Alabama. But one of the major battles for recognition of the new party was fought and won during the preceding week. County officials refused to allow the meeting to be held on the courthouse lawn as scheduled. The determination of the people of Lowndes prevented this attempted denial of their rights by the racist officials from succeeding.



May 17, 1941

John Maynard Keynes, advisor to the Bank of England, gave some tips to the American government on how to extort more funds from the American workers to finance the war.

Keynes offered the example of the British government's present methods, in a statement to the American press upon his arrival in New York, May 8, on the Atlantic Clipper.

Keynes explained that beginning this year the collection of income taxes from the British workers would be accomplished by deducting the taxes at their source — by the employer from their pay.

This, the British government thinks, will be a more "acceptable" method of tax collections, on the theory as Keynes stated, that "what you don't have you won't miss."

Book by Cuban 5 is powerful indictment of capitalist ‘justice’

The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class: ‘It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System. 135 pages. Pathfinder Press, 2016.

BY BETSEY STONE

OAKLAND, Calif. — “The book was awesome! Truly enlightening and inspiring how the five Cubans were able to turn prison into a learning experience and come out stronger!” Watani Stiner, a

IN REVIEW

fighter for Black rights who was framed up in the 1960s and recently released from San Quentin, told me after reading *The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class*.

The book, an interview by Socialist Workers Party leaders Mary-Alice Waters and Róger Calero with five revolutionaries who spent 16 years in prisons in the United States, is a powerful indictment of mass incarceration in the U.S. As Stiner points out, it’s a book about resistance, including the solidarity the Five extended to their fellow prison-

ers and the support they received in return. And, above all, it gives a picture of the values and human character that are the product of the Cuban Revolution.

All of the Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González — became revolutionaries growing up in Cuba, where workers and peasants overthrew capitalist rule in 1959 in a massive movement based on solidarity and internationalism.

They were framed up by the FBI in September 1998 for working to monitor counterrevolutionary Cuban groups in Florida to prevent violent attacks on Cuba. From that moment until December 2014, when the last three were freed, the Five were subjected to many of the cruelties they describe in the book.

A ‘microcosm’ of capitalist society

The U.S. prisons are a “microcosm” of the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism, Hernández says in the interview. A place that fosters violence, gangs and racism, where “the road to rehabilitation does not exist.”

“The American system of justice” is “used by the US government to enable a powerful minority to control a vast majority,” Labañino says. “A person who is poor — Black, Latino, Native American, white — faces the enormous savagery of what’s called American justice. It serves above all to sustain a system that has no solution for the poor, present or future.”

The Five do not gloss over what Labañino calls the “brutal mentality” of many of those they lived with, a product of the values that permeate capitalist society as a whole. But the book is filled with examples of acts of solidarity, help and respect the Five extended to their fellow prisoners and the respect and support they received in return.

Hernández said when African-American prisoners learned about Cuba’s support



Raúl Castro gives Hero of Republic awards to, from left, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González, Feb. 24, 2015. New book gives picture of values and human character that are product of Cuban Revolution.

of liberation struggles in Africa, they would ask, “Were you part of that?” When he told them he had fought in Angola against the South African apartheid regime — as did Fernando González and René González — they offered support.

Labañino says when he received the book *Cuba and Angola*, it caused a sensation. Many prisoners “didn’t know Cuban volunteers had been in Angola for sixteen years, defending its sovereignty against South Africa. The system of disinformation in the United States erases history,” he said. “Books by Malcolm X flew out of my hands.”

What’s possible with a revolution

In one chapter, the Five talk about Cubans they got to know in U.S. jails, some who had also spent time behind bars in Cuba. There are less material resources in Cuba, but prisoners there have access to education, conjugal visits, passes to be with family, and women inmates can stay with their newborn babies.

“I was inspired by what the Cuban Five say about incarceration in Cuba,” Anita Wills told me. She is a fighter against police killings whose son is in prison. “Prisons there are not about dehumanizing people. It shows what’s possible with a revolution.”

“In Cuba a prisoner is another human being,” Labañino said. In the U.S. prisoners are treated as the enemy, just as the cops see people as the enemy. “If

you don’t understand this,” he said, you won’t understand “why the police act the way they did in Ferguson, Missouri, [in 2014]. Why there is no solution within that system.”

The book includes some 40 photos. It highlights facts showing the scope of mass incarceration in the U.S., and explains why the Cuban government opposes the death penalty, and why life sentences there are rare. The Cuban Revolution has been “inspired always by a spirit of justice and not vengeance,” says President Raúl Castro.

In the conduct of the Cuban Five, readers will find lessons of value for any working-class fighter — examples of their courage, humor, dignity and discipline, of how they held onto and shared their ideas while respecting the views of those who disagreed.

Despite being separated for so many years in different prisons, each acted in the same manner, leading a worldwide struggle to win their freedom and emerging from prison stronger. How was this possible? It was the Cuban Revolution itself, the political consciousness and values they learned growing up.

“To spend seventeen months in the hole and sixteen years in prison and create paintings that don’t contain a shred of hatred ... that’s a product of the way we were educated as revolutionaries,” Guerrero says in a talk to students at the science and engineering university in Havana reprinted in the book.

“Nothing that happened is about us as individuals,” he told the students. “The standing we gained represents the resistance of our people.”

Their revolutionary convictions were strengthened by what they learned from prisoners from El Salvador, Mexico and other countries about what workers face today with the deepening capitalist economic crisis, a crisis that has helped spawn a growth in the drug trade, violence and repression.

“We came to know the problems of many places around the world,” Hernández said. Thanks to “the empire’s publicity machine,” some people think “capitalism is a house with two cars and a swimming pool. That Haiti isn’t capitalism. Central America isn’t capitalism. The poor neighborhoods of the United States aren’t capitalism. Capitalism is whatever it suits them to show!”

The actions of these five representatives of the Cuban Revolution — before, during and after their time within the U.S. working class — offer proof that it’s possible to build a world where brutalities they describe will not exist.



Courtesy of Ramón Labañino

Labañino, top right, with other Cubans at Georgia federal prison, July 2011. Book is filled with acts of solidarity the Five extended, and received in return.

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The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class

‘It’s the poor who face the savagery of the US ‘justice’ system’

GERARDO HERNÁNDEZ, RAMÓN LABAÑINO, ANTONIO GUERRERO, RENÉ GONZÁLEZ, FERNANDO GONZÁLEZ

Five Cuban revolutionaries, framed up by the U.S. government, spent up to 16 years as part of the U.S. working class behind bars. In this 2015 interview they talk about U.S. capitalist society and its “justice” system, and about the future of the Cuban Revolution.

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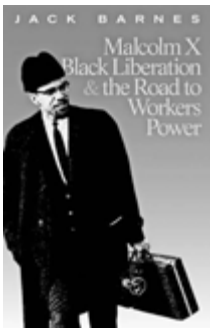
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Collapse of economic ‘miracle’ at root of Brazil political crisis

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Brazilian economic “miracle” has collapsed and along with it the myth that Brazil was going to be the next Japan. That’s what lies behind the political crisis there.

Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies voted 367 to 137 in favor of the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff April 17. If the Senate votes to open proceedings, Rousseff will have to step down for up to 180 days until her trial is over. A two-thirds majority is needed to remove her from office.

Rousseff is accused, not of filling her personal bank account, but of transferring \$11 billion from state banks to mask a budget deficit, in order to fund welfare programs that helped bolster the Workers Party in the 2014 elections.

Nearly two-thirds of the deputies are themselves facing corruption charges. Among those under investigation are two leaders of the impeachment campaign: Vice president Michel Temer and Eduardo Cunha, speaker of the Chamber. The two belong to the Brazilian Democratic Movement, which broke its alliance with the Workers Party in March. Rousseff charges that the moves are a “coup.”

The crisis has little to do with corruption, always a feature of bourgeois politics in Brazil. It has everything to do with the worldwide capitalist economic contraction and the exhaustion of the political perspective of the Workers Party — which has governed since 2003 — that permanent improvement could be won for working people if “left” parties took the reins of capitalist governments across Latin America.

In 2010 Brazil’s gross domestic product — the seventh largest in the world — was growing three times faster than the United States. Increasing trade with China fueled a boom for Brazil’s exports, which included oil, soybeans and beef. Chinese demand for construction materials pushed iron-ore prices from \$19 a ton in 2000 to \$126 in 2011 and China replaced the U.S. as Brazil’s largest trading partner.

Brazilian officials thought the trade with China — which soared from \$2 billion in 2000 to \$83 billion in 2013 — gave them increased bargaining power with U.S. imperialism. The Brazilian government was a key player in a bloc of Argentina, Venezuela, Paraguay and Uruguay to forge a trade agreement with the European Union. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that Brazil’s foreign minister prominently displayed a map of the world upside down in his office to show that “the era of emerging markets was at hand.”

Rousseff and the Workers Party took advantage of the good times to expand social programs begun by her predecessor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. This includes Bolsa Familia, a program that gives cash to low-income families on condition they prove their children attend school and get regular vaccinations. As part of its goal of expanding the middle class, the Workers Party-led govern-

ment also handed out loans for buying homes, at the same time that it made repossession for nonpayment easier.

Prosperity harsh for workers

Even in the midst of the commodity boom, conditions were harsh for the working class. Many earn less than the official minimum wage of about \$300 a month and more than 11 million live in *favelas* that often lack basic services. And despite high prices for oil and foreign currency reserves of \$370 billion, little was done to build needed infrastructure. China has 32 times as many miles of paved roads per square mile as Brazil.

In 2013 more than a million people took to the streets across the country to oppose fare hikes on public transportation.

Many were incensed that \$14 billion was being spent on the 2014 World Cup soccer games, while health care and infrastructure deteriorated. Protesters carried signs that said, “If my child gets sick, I can’t take him to a stadium” and chanted, “Lower the fare, charge it to FIFA’s account” referring to world soccer’s governing body.

Trade with China plummets

A year later the bottom dropped out of the capitalist commodity market and trade with China plummeted, as did the price of oil. Containerized exports from China to Brazil fell 60 percent in January compared to a year before.

Like other semicolonial nations battered by the trade and production crisis, Brazil’s economy shrank. Gross domestic product declined 3.8 percent in 2015.

The moves to impeach Rousseff have sparked heated debates across Brazil. But according to the *New York Times*, “much of the fury is confined

Millions rally in Cuba on May Day to defend revolution



Militant/Róger Calero

HAVANA — Millions of Cuban workers and youth celebrated May Day — International Workers Day — taking part in rallies and marches across the island. “Every year this event becomes a powerful demonstration of our people’s support to the economic and social system we chose as a sovereign, independent, socialist nation,” said Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento, general secretary of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), before the march here stepped off at the Plaza of the Revolution. Among the 600,000 marching were solidarity delegations from around the world, including numerous trade union representatives and a group of mothers and relatives of victims of police killings in the United States, some of whom have been waging the fight against police brutality for many years.

“The Cuban People will triumph” read the large banner at the head of the march, dedicated this year to workers in education. “With the strength of the working class in power,” said Guilarte, “we can assure you that we will raise the banners against injustice, inequality, underdevelopment, and discrimination.”

— RÓGER CALERO AND JACOB PERASSO

to older, middle-class professionals” on both sides. Working people, who had been the most enthusiastic supporters of the Workers Party, have mostly stayed away from both the pro- and anti-impeachment protests.

“We had such high hopes for Dilma, but her government turned out to be just like the others — corrupt as criminals,” Valdenor Soares da Silva, an ice cream vendor, told the *Times* in Brasilia.

At least 135 mayors elected on the Workers Party ticket have defected to

other parties in the last several weeks.

The Summer Olympics that will soon take place in Brazil, at first a symbol of Brazilian capital’s rising influence, is becoming a sign of its decline. On April 21, an elevated bike path built for the Olympics collapsed in Rio de Janeiro, killing two.

“It’s really a lot of money that could have been invested in health care or schools, rather than spent on some big project that falls down after four months,” restaurant worker Edino Feitosa da Silva, told the *Journal*.

DC event: Solidarity needed to lift US embargo of Cuba

BY VED DOOKHUN

WASHINGTON — “The blockade is still in place,” José Ramón Cabañas, Cuban ambassador to the U.S., told a meeting here April 22. “Solidarity is needed now more than ever to demand Washington lift the 55-year economic, financial, and trade embargo and end other attacks against Cuba.”

Cabañas was the keynote speaker at the panel discussion “Through Cuban Eyes,” held at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. Nearly 120 people attended.

“We recognize what President Obama has done in re-establishing diplomatic relations,” the ambassador said. “But the core questions remain the same.”

Among obstacles to the normalization of relations between Washington and Havana, he said, is “the Cuban Adjustment Act, which has to be stopped.” Since 1966, the U.S. government has maintained this policy, which gives expedited permanent residency to any Cuban who reaches the U.S., encouraging perilous crossings by boat and even hijackings. “Cuba is in favor of safe and legal migration,” Cabañas said.

He also denounced Washington’s Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program as “immoral and a form of slavery.” Over the last decade, U.S. immigration authorities have enticed some 7,000 of the tens of thousands of Cuban doctors and medical workers who have volunteered in other countries to defect to the United States under this scheme, part of Washington’s propaganda against the Cuban Revolution.

“And, of course,” Cabañas said, “there is the need to re-establish Cuban sovereignty over Guantánamo,” where Washington maintains its naval base on Cuban territory against the will of the Cuban people.

“Ecuador needs solidarity,” the Cuban ambassador said, pointing to the social disaster unfolding for workers and peasants in that country after a huge earthquake April 16. “Cuba is sending more medical volunteers to help,” he said, noting that three of the hundreds of Cuban doctors already there died in the quake.

Other speakers included Jorge Jérez, a young Cuban born with cerebral palsy. He is the subject of a documentary titled “The Power of the Weak” by producer

Tobias Kriele, which highlights the Cuban medical system and the horizons it opens for those with physical or other limitations. Jérez is touring the United States presenting the film.

“Obama is betting on Cuban youth as the generation of change,” against the revolution, Jérez said. “I am here to tell you that he is mistaken. We are the heirs of the revolution fighting for sovereignty and independence of our country.”

Other participants on the panel included Vanessa Avila and Alicia Steele, youth from the U.S. who recently graduated from Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine; attorney José Per-tierra; writer Stephen Kimber; Jennifer Bryant, representing the Venceremos Brigade; and Gail Walker, executive director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace.

The panel capped the second annual “Days of Action against the Blockade” organized by the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity. The April 18-22 activities included congressional lobbying against the embargo and showings of “The Power of the Weak” at UDC and American University.

Omari Musa contributed to this article.

Trump, Clinton debate best foreign policy for imperialism

Continued from front page

military power is vital to defending national interests, that American intervention does more good than harm and that the writ of the United States properly reaches, as [George W.] Bush once put it, into ‘any dark corner of the world.’” He adds that Clinton “is the last true hawk left in the race.”

Landler notes Clinton’s “decades-long cultivation of the military,” beginning when her husband Bill Clinton was president and continuing during her stint as U.S. senator in New York and later as President Barack Obama’s secretary of state.

A month after the Sept. 11, 2001, al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, Sen. Clinton traveled to Fort Drum in New York’s Jefferson County at the invitation of Gen. Buster Hagenbeck, the new Army 10th Mountain Division commander. “She sat down,” he told Landler, “took her shoes off, put her feet up on the coffee table and said, ‘General, do you know where a gal can get a cold beer around here?’”

Clinton for more robust intervention

“Spurning a long tradition of New York senators,” Landler adds, she took a seat on the Senate Armed Services Committee instead of Foreign Relations when offered a choice in 2002. “For a politician looking to hone hard-power credentials — a woman who aspired to be commander in chief — it was the perfect training ground,” Landler said. “She dug in like a grunt at boot camp.”

During her time as secretary of state,



Reuters/Daniel Wallis

People inspect residential building bombed in June 2011 during Washington’s massive airstrikes against Libya. Democratic front runner Hillary Clinton, then secretary of state, pressed for the bombardment.

Clinton generally favored “more robust intervention” than Obama, Landler notes. Obama has been reluctant to send large numbers of ground troops, preferring to use drones, airstrikes, special forces and “diplomacy” to advance Washington’s interests.

Clinton was a proponent of Gen. Stanley McChrystal’s recommendation in 2009 to send 40,000 more troops to Afghanistan. She supported the Pentagon’s plan to leave a “residual force” of up to 20,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. She opposed proposals by aides to Obama in February 2009 to make symbolic concessions to Moscow as a gesture of “good will in resetting the relationship,” the *Times* says.

In 2010 after the North Korean military allegedly torpedoed a South Korean ship, Clinton backed a plan to send a U.S. warship to the Yellow Sea between North Korea and China, a move sure to provoke Beijing. “We’ve got to run it up the gut!” Clinton said. Obama declined her plan.

In one dispute with Obama where she won out, Clinton pushed for the use of U.S. air power in 2011 to hasten the fall of the regime of Moammar Gadhafi in Libya.

There are numerous other examples.

Trump’s ‘America First’

In a speech April 27 Trump said that “since the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union” the U.S.

government has “lacked a coherent foreign policy” and under Obama and Clinton has been “reckless, rudderless and aimless.”

Trump says he is going to put “America First.” He says he opposed the U.S. war in Iraq and that Washington should be “getting out of the nation-building business.”

“Unlike other candidates for the presidency, war and aggression will not be my first instinct,” Trump said. “A superpower understands that caution and restraint are signs of strength.”

“We went from mistakes in Iraq to Egypt to Libya, to President Obama’s line in the sand in Syria,” referring to Obama’s empty threats to take action against the Bashar al-Assad regime if it used chemical weapons.

“Each of these actions have helped to throw the region into chaos,” Trump said “and gave ISIS [Islamic State] the space it needs to grow and prosper.” While Trump says Obama gave too much away with his “disastrous” deal with Iran, unlike his now-defeated Republican competitors he has never said he would tear it up. Instead, he says he will “renegotiate” it.

The Republican candidate also says that to bargain from a position of strength he will “rebuild our military” and spend more money on new armaments. At the same time he said he will tell ISIS “their days are numbered.”

In the increasing disorder in the Mid-

east, Trump says that Washington should “seek common ground” with Moscow and Beijing.

Conservatives and liberals alike who are apoplectic about Trump’s march to the Republican nomination derided his foreign policy speech. The liberal Huffington Post said it was an “incoherent view of the world,” while the conservative *National Review* called it “incoherent and shallow.”

But many working people who have been drawn to Trump’s meetings, seeking answers to the grinding depression conditions spawned by the capitalist economic crisis, are skeptical of U.S. intervention around the world. They are attracted to his portrayal of himself as the candidate of “peace and prosperity, not war and destruction.”

“More drones or fewer, more diplomacy or less, more special forces or more infantry, everything Washington does is to defend the interests of U.S. capitalists around the world, not working people,” said Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, May 3. “While Clinton and Trump have tactical differences on how to best defend imperialist interests, nothing they do advances the interests of the working class. Working people need our own foreign policy independent of the bosses.”

May

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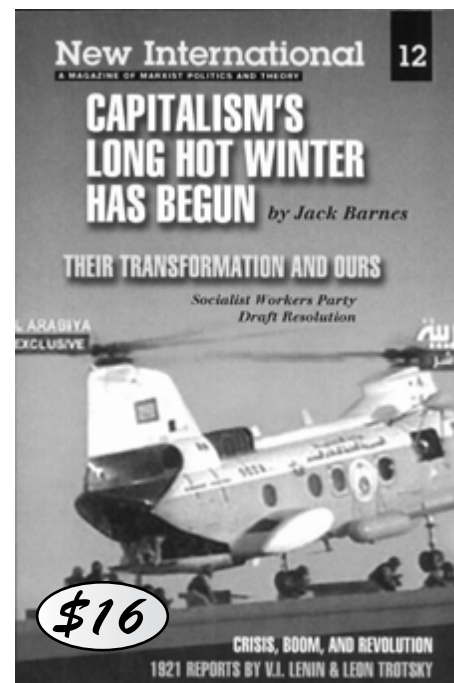
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Int'l solidarity, not 'Americanism'

Continued from front page

nations around the world know they should come to the table or else.

What America are they talking about? The America of the Verizon workers, forced out on strike by bosses who want to slash medical coverage, contract out work at lower pay and close down call centers? Or the America of the Verizon bosses? The America of fast-food workers fighting for \$15 and a union? Or the America of the propertied rulers who have nothing but scorn for working people here and abroad?

Capitalism is in a deep worldwide crisis. Unable to make the high profits they want by investing in production-expanding factories, the capitalist class instead speculates on everything from stocks and bonds to the future prices of oil and other commodities. In the factories, mills and mines they speed up the work pace with total disregard for safety and the lives of workers, slash pay and attack our unions.

The U.S. bosses' foreign policy is an extension of their course at home.

Washington emerged victorious from World War II as the dominant imperialist power. Today, the world order they established is coming apart. From the Middle East to Europe to the South China Sea, Washington faces challenges, conflicts and disorder.

That's what's at the root of the disputes between Trump, Clinton and Obama.

More drones or fewer, more diplomacy or less, more special forces or more infantry, more money for NATO or less, trade pact or no trade pact — everything Washington does, whoever the occupant of the White House happens to be, is to defend the interests of U.S. capitalists around the world, not working people anywhere.

Clinton and Trump's tactical differences are on how to best defend imperialist interests.

Working people need our own foreign policy independent of the bosses.

Revolutionary Cuba proves that this is possible. Cuban revolutionaries don't say "Cuba first." They start with recognition of the right of self-determination of every nation and offer solidarity to all those fighting imperialist domination.

The Socialist Workers Party stands shoulder to shoulder with Verizon workers standing up to the bosses here. We stand with workers and farmers in Syria who are being battered by the dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad and its backers in Moscow and Tehran, the reactionary Islamic State, and the efforts of Washington to defend its imperialist interests in the region. We demand the withdrawal of all U.S. troops abroad, from Korea to Syria to Latin America.

Under capitalism there is no peace.

Building a movement capable of replacing the dictatorship of the propertied rulers here at home with a government of workers and farmers is decisive to the future of all humanity.

Deaths mount in Syria

Continued from front page

are seeking to reduce hostilities and impose some degree of stability in Syria to protect each of their interests in the region.

Meanwhile, Washington has increased its special operations forces on the ground in Syria and continues to raise its troop levels in Iraq.

From April 22 through May 1 daily airstrikes, including with barrel bombs, killed more than 250 civilians in Aleppo, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. One of the targets hit overnight April 27-28 was al-Quds Hospital in an opposition-controlled area, the only one providing pediatric care in the city. At least 50 people were killed, including six medics, according to Doctors Without Borders.

Massive protests began in Syria in March 2011 demanding political rights and an end to Assad's rule, but they were crushed by the government with bombings, arrests and killings. An assortment of armed groups formed in response and took control of territory, including areas around Aleppo, the country's largest city. Shifting coalitions of Islamist as well as secular groups have been competing for territory and fighting government forces since then.

Over the course of the five-year war close to half a million people have been killed and more than half of the country's population displaced. Amid this chaos and the lack of a revolutionary working-class leadership, the reactionary Islamic State was able to seize swaths of territory in Syria and Iraq.

In recent months Assad's forces backed by Russian firepower and special forces have seized key parts of Aleppo. Some 300,000 people still live in the rebel-controlled eastern parts of the city and have faced years of air and artillery bombardment by the regime.

In two villages in northwest Syria where Nusra Front, an affiliate of al-Qaeda, was driven out by rebel forces in April, "civilians took to the street in anti-Assad demonstrations," reported the *Washington Post*, but were then "heavily bombed by Assad."

U.S. military presence grows

Washington is sending an additional 250 special operations forces to Syria, boosting the 50 deployed in October. Their aim is to equip, advise and expand the numbers of Sunni Arab fighters combating Islamic State. Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a U.S. Senate hearing April 28.

The Syrian Democratic Forces, which is leading the fight against Islamic State in eastern and central Syria, is led by some 30,000 Kurdish fighters, and involves 6,000 Sunni Arabs, according to Dunford.

A week earlier Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced an additional 200 U.S. troops were on their way to Iraq, pushing the official Pentagon "troop cap" to 4,087. That figure doesn't count at least 1,000 U.S. military personnel there on temporary rotations. They include Marines in northern Iraq stationed at "a satellite base positioned to protect American trainers at a nearby, larger base," reported the *Post*.

President Barack Obama has also authorized U.S. commanders in Iraq to use Apache attack helicopters and established a new task force where U.S. troops will play a greater role in "advise and assist" missions.

In deepening its involvement, Washington seeks to reshape the Iraqi army into a fighting force to drive Islamic State out of Mosul, the country's second largest city, that it has occupied for nearly two years.

But the Shia-led Iraqi government of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi is in deep crisis, fueled by a drop in oil prices, sectarian frictions it has promoted against Sunnis and Kurds and factional divisions with other Shiite politicians. Supporters of Iraqi Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr stormed into Iraq's parliament April 30, scaling concrete walls surrounding the exclusive Green Zone area, where government offices and foreign embassies are located. They demanded Abadi appoint a new cabinet.

The government declared a state of emergency in Baghdad, and brought back some troops from the front lines against Islamic State in Anbar province.

"Iran-backed militia groups aligned with Iraq's government announced late Sunday night [May 1] that they are deploying fighters in Baghdad to help secure the city," the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Al-Sadr's supporters withdrew from the Green Zone that day. The same weekend Islamic State conducted suicide attacks that left dozens dead, including in Baghdad.

LETTERS

Justice for Dontre Hamilton

Some 300 people braved the cold rain April 30 to protest the brutal murder of Dontre Hamilton at the hands of police officer Christopher Manney two years ago that day. On the day of the shooting, Hamilton, who had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, was sleeping in the park. The first cops on the scene determined that Hamilton wasn't doing anything illegal. Officer Manney showed up later, claimed Hamilton resisted his pat down, and shot him 14 times. Manney was not charged.

Nate Hamilton spoke for the Coalition for Justice. The rally was held at Red Arrow Park, the site of his brother's killing.

Rich Gaeta

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Railroad safety

Your April 25 article about the Amtrak crash in Chester, Pennsylvania, that killed maintenance worker Joe Carter Jr. and supervisor Peter John Adamovich was on target. You quoted John Staggs, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania, saying the real source of the crash is the dangerous conditions and pressures created by the capitalist bosses.

Those conditions include the fact that rather than notifying train crews in writing of the location of a work crew and having the train engineer talk directly to the work supervisor by radio before they proceed through their work area, Amtrak uses what the Federal Railroad Administration refers to a simplified method of establishing working limits called Foul Time.

The work crew informs the dispatcher that they are working on a particular track and this dispatcher



Rich Gaeta

Nate Hamilton speaks in Milwaukee April 30 on second anniversary of killing of his brother, Dontre Hamilton, by police officer Christopher Manney.

is supposed to route all trains to an adjacent track.

While notifying train crews of track work and having them talk to the supervisor in charge is obviously the safest course, it can lead to delaying of some trains. Rail bosses, more concerned with on-time performance than with safety, have successfully lobbied to increase the use of Foul Time.

This is something all rail workers must organize to fight against.

Mike Galati

Fredericksburg, Virginia

Defend right to abortion

Planned Parenthood-Gwinnett Health Center in Lawrenceville, the only Atlanta metro area Planned Parenthood clinic with

Saturday hours, was picketed by about 60 opponents of women's rights April 23. Planned Parenthood Southeast Inc. organized a presence of about 40 defenders of a women's right to choose abortion.

Among participants were a number of younger women and men, including a contingent of five students from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta. Ruvani Jayaweera, a student there, told the *Militant*, "We came because it's important to stand with a women's right to choose."

Staci Fox, CEO of Planned Parenthood Southeast, said, "These protests are about shame and intimidation. Women deserve to access safe and legal health care without judgment."

Lisa Potash

Atlanta, Georgia

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.